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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
UNITED NATIONS
Drafting Group
31st meeting
4 August 1995

COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Draft declaration (rolling text 4 - informal) submitted by the Chairman

1. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we, the Heads of State, Heads of Government and Heads of Delegation, representing the peoples of the world:

- Solemnly reaffirm the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and our commitments to them, particularly the principles of the sovereignty, sovereign equality, territorial integrity and non-interference in the domestic jurisdiction of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the avoidance of the threat or use of force;

- Express our gratitude to all men and women who have made the United Nations possible, done its work and served its ideals, particularly those who have given their lives during service to the United Nations;

- Are determined that the United Nations of the future will work with renewed vigour and effectiveness in promoting peace, development, equality, justice and understanding amongst the peoples of the world.

2. It remains deeply relevant to recall that the Charter of the United Nations was written following the untold sufferings of the Second World War. Its commitment "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" is as vital today as it was fifty years ago. In this, as in other respects, the Charter gives expression to the common values and aspirations of humankind.

3. The United Nations has been tested by conflict, humanitarian crisis and turbulent change, yet it has survived and played an important role in preventing another global conflict and has achieved much for people all over the world. The United Nations has helped to shape the very structure of relations between nations in the modern age. Through the ongoing decolonization process and the elimination of apartheid, hundreds of millions of human beings have been assured the fundamental right of self-determination.

4. At this time, which is also the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War and following the end of the cold war, it is widely recognized that a new era for peace, democracy and cooperation has been opened. The speed and extent of change in today's world point to a future of great complexity and challenge and to a sharp increase in the level of expectations of the United Nations.

5. For these reasons and in order to be able to learn from mistakes made in the past and to accept the challenges of the future, it is essential that the United Nations itself be reformed, restructured and modernized. The role of the General Assembly, the universal organ of the States Members of the United Nations, must be revitalized. The role of the Economic and Social Council must be strengthened to enable it to carry out effectively, in the modern age, the tasks it has been assigned with respect to the well-being and standards of life of all people. The Security Council must be made more effective and more representative, through an expansion of its membership and further improvements in its working efficiency and the transparency of its work and procedures. These and other changes, within the United Nations system, must now be made if we are to ensure that the United Nations of the future serves well the people in whose name it was established.

6. To meet these challenges and while recognizing that action to secure global peace, security and stability will be futile unless the economic and social needs of people are addressed, we will:

- Promote methods and means for the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and enhance the capabilities of the United Nations in conflict prevention, preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peace-building;

- Strongly support United Nations, regional and national efforts on arms control, limitation and disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, in all aspects, and other weapons of mass destruction, including biological and chemical weapons and other forms of particularly excessively injurious or indiscriminate weapons, in pursuit of our common commitment to a world free of all these weapons;

- Continue to support United Nations action to assist people under foreign occupation to exercise their right to self-determination;

- Act together to defeat the threats to States and people posed by terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, and internationally organized crime and the illicit trade in arms and the production, consumption and trafficking of narcotics;

- Strengthen consultation and cooperation between regional arrangements or agencies and the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

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